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ABSTRACT

The relationship between public economic support of libraries and general economic conditions is explored, drawing on interviews with state librarians and their deputies in seven Southern states. In these states, libraries have traditionally been supported, although frequently with lower per capita amounts than in other parts of the country. Librarians in southern states appear to have been strong supporters of the Library Services and Construction Act, and southern legislators have been important on the national level in helping libraries. Library aid in these states remains below that of other geographic areas, but has increased many times over the years. The survey indicates that there is a link between support of higher education and support of libraries. In general, state librarians felt that a prosperous economy drives library aid, and not the reverse, as the author had postulated. Most of these librarians thought that there is a distinct tie-in between libraries and economic development. No differences in library support based on the party affiliation of the governor were apparent to these state librarians. Ten tables and one figure illustrate the discussion. (Contains 26 references.) (SLD)

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ED 364 255

LIBRARY SUPPORT AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Abigail W. Delfausse

Library support might be one indicator of economic health. It could, of course, be said that as per capita income of states goes up, library support rises. Although not always the case, this would be a logical deduction. The following material seeks to show a cycle -- of library support being a factor contributing to general economic prosperity, which then leads to greater library support.

There could be several reasons for this. People moving into a community often ask about the quality of libraries, just as they would ask about the level of educational, cultural, and sports activities. Corporate executives considering diversifying and seeking other states for new plants, expect a level of libraries, schools, and the arts commensurate with that to which they are accustomed.

If one looks at per capita income levels of states and then at per capita library support (state and local), one sees some interesting patterns. For example, in 1989, the top per capita incomes in the United States were in Connecticut (#1 -- $24,604), New Jersey (#2 -- $23,764), Massachusetts (#3 -- $22,196), Alaska (#4 -- $21,173), Maryland (#5 -- $21,020), and New York (#6 -- $20,540). Their corresponding per capita support to libraries (state and local) was also high: Connecticut -- $22.10; New Jersey -- $21.16; Massachusetts -- $19.18; Alaska -- $23.64; Maryland -- $24.45; and in first position in the U.S. -- New York -- $29.48.

According to Deborah Selsky in Library Journal[1], library spending has been by far the highest in the Northeast while in the South it's been the least.

[1]Deborah Selsky, "Economic Outlook for Libraries." Library Journal. June 15, 1989, pp. 28-30.

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Highest per capita Incomes and
Library Support, 1989

State	Per capita Income, 1989	Rank	Per capita Library Support, 1989
Connecticut	$24,604	1	$22.10
New Jersey	23,764	2	21.16
Massachusetts	22,196	3	19.18
Alaska	21,173	4	23.64
Maryland	21,020	5	24.45
New York	20,540	6	29.48

N.B. The library support figures combine state and local support.

Source: World Almanac: 1991 and
James S. Hirsch, "Empty Shelves: Many Public Libraries Suffer Major Blows in Local Budget Crises," The Wall Street Journal, February 13, 1991, p. A6.

This prompted me to look at seven of the Southern states -- where libraries have been traditionally supported but frequently with less per capita amounts. It is interesting that library aid in the South has often been increased in "quantum leaps," according to Bruce A. Shuman. In his essay on state aid to public libraries, he found that 41% of all major funding gains between 1949 and 1977 took place in the South.[2]

I was fortunate to interview state librarians and deputies in these states: Alabama, Kentucky, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, and West Virginia. One of the answers I was seeking was whether or not party politics played a role in library support. Bruce Shuman had posited that Southern libraries were particularly supported because of Democratic governors. With this conclusion, only Blane Dessy, director of the Alabama Public Library Service, agreed. Although Guy Hunt is now the first Republican governor since Reconstruction (and is supportive of libraries), the state legislature is always Democratic.[3]

In Alabama in Fiscal Year (FY) 1990 per capita state aid to libraries was $.88 1/2, but for FY 1991 the amount will be $1.25 -- a 34% increase. However, in Alabama there is a budget reduction called a "proration" which cuts back aid after it's been awarded. For FY 1991, a 6 1/2% proration has been imposed amounting to $1.17-$1.18 per capita state aid. State aid to Alabama libraries began in the late 1960's, when the per capita was $.10. Mr. Dessy

[2] Bruce A. Shuman, "Party-in-Power as a Determinant of State Aid to Public Libraries." Eric Document 186612, February 15, 1980. Given as a paper at the 1980 Annual Conference of the Association of American Library Schools, Austin, Texas.

[3] Interview with Blane K. Dessy, June 13, 1991, Montgomery, Alabama.

Per Capita Ranking of Income for Seven States

Rank 1989	Rank 1990		Per cap. inc. 1989	Per cap. inc. 1990
34	35	North Carolina	15,221	16,203
35	37	Tennessee	14,765	15,798
39	43	Kentucky	13,777	14,929
41	44	Alabama	13,679	14,826
42	42	South Carolina	13,616	15,099
49	49	West Virginia	12,529	13,747
50	50	Mississippi	11,835	12,735

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, April 1990, courtesy of the West Virginia State Library. Also, Survey of Current Business, April 1991, p. 33.

Rank of Per Capita Income: 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990

	Per capita income				Rank			
	1960	1970	1980	1990	1960	1970	1980	1990
Alabama	1,539	2,945	7,704	14,826	47	48	47	44
Kentucky	1,618	3,141	8,022	14,929	44	43	43	43
Mississippi	1,228	2,597	6,926	12,735	50	50	50	50
North Carolina	1,615	3,236	7,999	16,203	45	39	44	35
South Carolina	1,425	3,004	7,589	15,099	48	47	48	42
Tennessee	1,607	3,151	8,030	15,798	46	41	42	37
West Virginia	1,622	3,078	7,915	13,747	43	45	46	49

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Survey of Current Business, April 1991, p. 33.

attributes the growth and the favorable attitude of the House and the Senate to the "intensely personal nature of the legislature." [4] The fact that legislators have no staffs makes them "immediately accessible;" they thus "lend [themselves] to being lobbied." Another factor in library support has been the strength of Southern legislators (federal) who chaired committees at the time of the LSCA (Library Service and Construction Act) coming into existence. According to Dessy, "several of the Southeastern state librarians were interested in lobbying," and these were "female state librarians with incredible clout." [5]

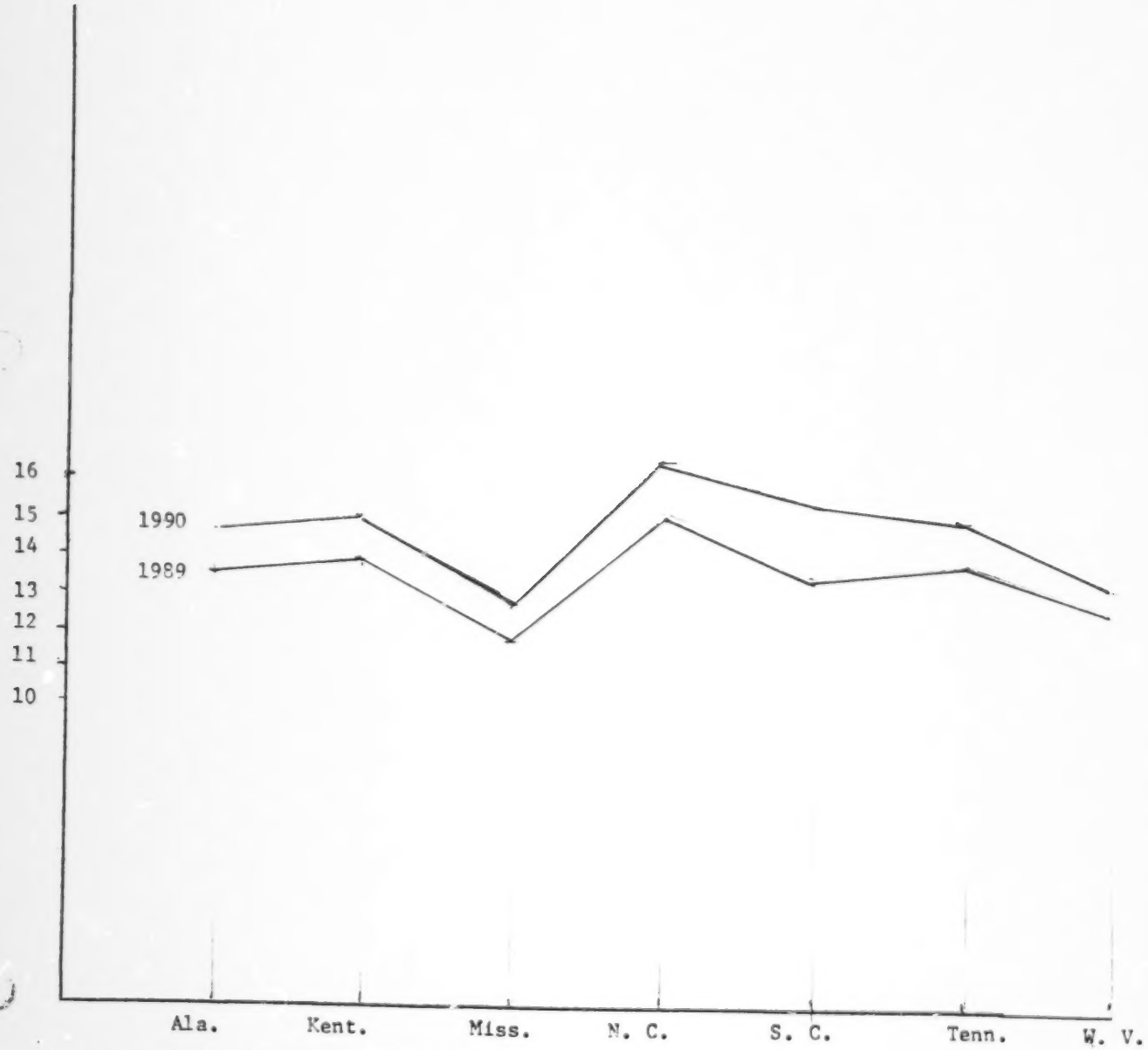
Alabama has moved from 47th position in per capita incomes in 1960 to 44th position in 1990. Unemployment rates have improved since 1985: from 8.9% to 7.0%. State Budget and Tax News in February 1987 depicted Alabama as midway between all states for progressiveness and regressiveness of taxes.[6] But Mr. Dessy made the case for Alabama's regressive tax system. In Alabama there is a very low property tax and a high sales tax. In Montgomery County, for example, the sales tax is 10% and is levied on everything from prescriptions to groceries. Property taxes are the lowest in the country; tax incentives have made Alabama "one of the top four" states to attract industry, according to Blane Dessy. The big beneficiaries of the low property tax are the paper companies, which have vast holdings of timber. There is a tremendous timber lobby which precludes tax reform.

Another indicator of economic development is the growth in manufacturing employment. From 1978-1986 the only state of those I visited with a positive annual rate of growth was North Carolina. The most negative annual rate of growth occurred with West Virginia (almost 5% shrinkage per year), with Kentucky, Tennessee, and South Carolina next in decline of manufacturing employment (almost -2%) and Mississippi and Alabama less than 1% negative each year. In terms of growth

[4] Blane K. Dessy interview.
[5] Ibid.
[6] State Budget and Tax News, February 10, 1987, p. 11.

Per Capita Income 1989 and 1990: Seven Southern States

in 000's



Source: World Almanacs, 1987-1991.

Unemployment rates: 1985-1989

	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	(percentages)
Alabama	8.9	9.8	7.8	7.2	7.0	
Kentucky	9.5	9.3	8.8	7.9	6.2	
Mississippi	10.3	11.7	10.2	8.4	7.8	
North Carolina	5.4	5.3	4.5	3.6	3.5	
South Carolina	6.8	6.2	5.6	4.5	4.7	
Tennessee	8.0	8.0	6.6	5.8	5.1	
W. Virginia	13.0	11.8	10.8	9.9	8.6	

Source: World Almanacs, 1986-1991

in total employment for the same 9-year period, West Virginia is the only Southern state with a negative average annual rate of change. It ranks 50th of all the states in growth of employment. North Carolina ranks 14th, South Carolina 21st, Tennessee 28th, Alabama 32nd, Kentucky 39th, and Mississippi 40th.[7]

Alabama's per capita income in 1989 -- $13,679 -- allowed it to rank as #41 in the U.S. In the same year its total state and local per capita library support was $8.13, ranking it 8th from the bottom.

Kentucky, in 1989, ranked 39th in the United States in per capita income -- with $13,777. In per capita state and local support it was third from the bottom, in 1989, with $7.04. Currently, the figure is $7.85.[8] In Kentucky, State Librarian James Nelson reconfirmed the strength of Southern leadership in library support, saying that "regional libraries are strong in the South." Carl Perkins was a major force behind the Library Service and Construction Act. He chaired the House Committee on Education and Labor. Confirming what Blane Dessy had said in Alabama, Mr. Nelson stated that "Southern leadership in Congress has been significant." When asked about Democratic leadership in the state contributing to more state aid, Mr. Nelson responded that "Kentucky did well under a Republican governor, seeing a connection between libraries and education."[9] The support of the governor is important because "Kentucky is a powerful executive state," not a legislative state. The current governor's wife is interested in literacy and, with her influence, the State Library started a state literacy program. Now there is a Literacy Commission which businesses

[7] State Policy Reports, February 24, 1987, p. 24; based on a report by the state of Iowa.

[8] Interview with James Nelson, June 18th, 1991, Frankfort, Kentucky.

[9] Interview with James Nelson.

[10] Interview with Deputy Commissioner of the Mississippi Library Commission, Jane Smith, June 14th, 1991, Jackson, Mississippi.

all over the state support, including Fruit-of-the-Loom. Also, Kentucky Educational TV, which is a big enterprise, has been active.

The Tennessee Valley Authority has had a powerful impact on libraries in Kentucky. The TVA wanted to make sure its employees had good libraries, and so built some of the initial ones. Kentucky was a little bit behind in getting state support for libraries, but in the late 40's the Kentucky Library Association sponsored a bill, to be presented at the present session of the General Assembly, requesting an appropriation of $300,000 for each year 1948-49 and 1949-50.... The funds would be used for aiding in the establishment, extension and development of local public library facilities through demonstrations, educational programs, technical assistance, promotional work, etc." [10]

The first bookmobiles were organized by Mary Bingham of the Louisville publishing family. Three terms ago Republican governor Louie Nunn s wife was especially strong with libraries. Kentucky is largely a rural state where libraries are decentralized. Although "farmers are one of the most information-oriented parts of the economy" (their "whole life is based on information")[11], they don t spend much money for libraries. It is possible that manufacturing industries stimulate more economic development. Particularly important for the future of the economy are the cottage-type small businesses, which deal with information. If libraries put themselves in touch with this area, there will be an impact, according to Mr. Jim Nelson. Part of the problem is "libraries' own self-perception." Kentucky has a program called the Rural Telework Center, jointly sponsored by Bell South, GTE, and the Science and Technology Council.

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10 Conference on State Aid for Libraries in Massachusetts. Survey of State Aid for Libraries, Programs, and Proposed Plans: A Report prepared by the Committee on State Aid for Libraries in Other States. Boston, Massachusetts, March 1948.

11 Interview with James Nelson.

This already has the participation of entrepreneurs and small businesses, and Mr. Nelson suggested that perhaps libraries could become involved.

Merchandising is important to Kentucky. Interstate highways were mentioned as an important marketing factor. Mr. Nelson said that within one day s drive 80% of the country s population is accessible, e.g. St. Louis, New York, Chicago, and Atlanta. Kentucky has a good interstate program, with $600 million in tax monies just approved for their developmnnt. Kentucky is also in good shape because it has a lottery. Along with Florida and Virginia Kentucky is the only Southern state with a lottery. On the chart on page 12 you will see that Kentucky is 12% below the national average for taxation. Still, with a lottery it joins the company of more economically successful states such as New Jersey and Connecticut. Below is a 1985 listing of some of the states lottery revenue:

Lottery Revenue to States Per Capita, FY 1985[12]

State	Per Capita Net Revenue
Massachusetts	$67.31
Maryland	60.63
Pennsylvania	52.20
New Jersey	52.01
Connecticut	47.18
Illinois	44.89
Michigan	39.60

To attract business, in some cases the state has given 5 years tax-free. Toyota was one of these companies, which was attracted to Georgetown, Kentucky. So far, Toyota has given $1 million to the University of Kentucky library. In 1989, driven by the need for education reform, the General Assembly passed

12 State Policy Reports, January 29, 1987, p. 23.

State and Local Tax Effort Index, 1988

U.S. is equal to 100. All percentages are related to this:

State		Rank
New York	152	1
Oregon	99	18
Alabama	84	45
West Virginia	88	42
Kentucky	88	41
Arkansas	84	46
Tennessee	83	47
North Carolina	93	30
South Carolina	96	24
Mississippi	94	29

Source: State Business and Tax News, October 1, 1990, p. 12.

It is interesting to note that all of the Southern states examined in this paper fall below the national average.

a law for the highest tax increase in the history of the state.

Support for higher education has also improved in Kentucky. In the last 2 years Kentucky has increased her support of colleges and universities by 23%.[13] The University of Kentucky houses the NASA Technological and Application Center (a subcontractor from NASA) which has access to more on-line databases than anyone in Kentucky, including libraries. There is also a state Department of Information Systems, with which the State Library is working.

Education support can also be a factor leading to better support of libraries. If universities are supported, their libraries will reap the benefit. Mississippi, so often ranked as 50th in ratings of the whole country, has stepped up its support of education, although her education governor, Ray Mabus, has recently been defeated. Jane Smith, the Mississippi Library Commission's[14] Deputy Commissioner, stressed that a new emphasis on education is a part of an increase in the desire to help libraries. She said that Mabus had proposed wide-scale educational reform, which for now has not been able to be funded. Ms. Smith felt that it was interesting that his colleague across the Mississippi, Bill Clinton of Arkansas, was also a proponent of educational reform. Both Arkansas and Mississippi have been at the tail's end of support to libraries. On the next page I have shown the percentage of state spending for education. All of the Southern states studied have committed a large percentage for education-- all significantly above the national average.

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13 "State Funds for Higher Education Drop in Year; First Decline Since Survey Began 33 Years Ago." The Chronicle of Higher Education, November 6, 1991.

14 Interview with Deputy Commissioner of the Mississippi Library Commission, Jane Smith, June 14, 1991, Jackson, Mississippi.

Percentage of State Spending
for Major Functions, FY 1989

State	Percentage
Alabama (#1)	53.7
North Carolina	49.9
South Carolina	41.0
West Virginia	40.5
Kentucky	42.4
Tennessee	37.4
Mississippi	40.5

National average equals 35.9%. As a reference point, Oregon spends 26.8%.

Source: State Budget and Tax News, May 12, 1989, p. 9.

Ms. Smith feels that, as the educational tide rises, so will the library.

Mississippi has consistently ranked at the bottom of per capita income levels. In 1989 its per capita income was $11,835. In that same year per capita state and local support were $6.58, higher than the lowest-ranking Arkansas ($5.98). With local funding included, Mississippi's 1990 aid was $5.78. In Mississippi there are two components of state library aid -- the first being a per capita amount per library system, and the second being an extra $5,000 per county in the system. For example, for FY 1992 Benton County, the smallest library system, will receive $.9312 per capita. Originally, the aim was for $1.00 per capita and $5,000, but the plan is to reach $1.10 plus $6,000 per system.

Mississippi also has regressive taxes. According to Ms. Smith, the "major problem is the corporate tax." By law the governor must maintain a balanced budget. 5% is the maximum cut for agencies; no further reduction can take place until each agency is cut by the same amount. Governor Mabus was "reluctant to cut education."

According to Ms. Smith, there has been a "long tradition, for both Mississippi and Louisiana, of liberalism," and "a tradition of book-reading and tutoring." Under the Works Progress Administration, during the Depression, 80 libraries were established in the state. The Women's Federation of Women's Clubs was largely responsible for the early libraries in Mississippi, and is still very actively involved in library development. Some of the libraries were initially subscription libraries; this included the Yazoo City Library which was for whites only. As libraries expanded, the headquarters became the county libraries, and these were open to the entire public. The county libraries are formed into systems, such as the Jackson-Hinds library system, with one budget, board, and director; this allows resources to be pooled. There are 45 library systems in Mississippi, and the Library Commission deals with the 45, not with the 243-250 public libraries. The "voice was the Library Commission" and it remains the "centralized core."

The Library Commission is attempting to emphasize economic involvement in two ways: literacy and patent research. Ms. Smith says that the "first step is to be designated as a Patent Depository Library" for federal patents. The Commission wants it funded all at once, to include 5 satellite stations which would do the research on-line. A local patent library would stimulate entrepreneurial activity. Many patents are currently "held by Mississippians, and could generate personal income and taxes." Presently, Mississippians must go to the following for patent research: Birmingham and Auburn, Alabama; Atlanta; Little Rock; Memphis; and New Orleans and Louisiana State University.

By contrast, North Carolina, a more industrial and diversified state economically, is the highest of the seven states visited in its state and local support to libraries. In 1989 this support was $10.55 per capita. Currently, it is $11.04 ($11.25 if one includes federal aid.) State aid alone is in the $1.83 range. North Carolina, of course, has the prestigious Research Triangle as well as the Interstate-85 corridor of manufacturing and service. Per capita income is $15,221, which places it in 34th position of all the states. Unemployment figures vary according to geography. In Chapel Hill it is 2%, in Raleigh -- 5%, and in two counties, Graham and Tyrrell, it is 18%. Thus, North Carolina is, according to State Librarian Howard McGinn, a "patchwork of First World and Third World counties."[15]

Howard McGinn is well acquainted with economic information networks in his state. He had spoken at Reystone, Colorado in November 1989 at the U.S. West- and Colorado State Library-sponsored conference, "The Role of Information in the Economy of the West," and subsequently was an organizer of a similarly patterned conference this year on "The Role of Information in the

15 Interview with Howard F. McGinn, June 11, 1991, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Economy of the Southeast." He is the founder of a system of computer networks between the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and the State Library, which include information on state construction and department of transportation bids. Through this, any patron of a North Carolina library hooked up to the system can find possible jobs and contracts. Mr. McGinn stressed that we need "to look at all information assets," including networks, "as an investment," and urged that they not just be available to public libraries, but to academic libraries as well.

When I asked about the impact of the Governor on state support to libraries, and whether or not it was true that Democratic governors give more aid to libraries, I was assured that the current Republican governor, Jim Martin, is particularly supportive of libraries.

State aid to North Carolina libraries was ratified on March 8, 1941, which "established [a] Public Library Service Fund of $100,000 annually for promoting, aiding, and equalizing public library service in North Carolina."[16] Amounts increased to $125,000 (1943-45), $175,000 (1945-47), and $275,000 (1947-49) annually. No funds were to be used for buildings, equipment, or furniture. This increased the "number of people having access to public libraries" from 1,090,301 in 1941 to 3,225,648 in 1946. The income of public libraries went from $389,362 to $959,755 during the same period -- from 10 cents to 26 cents per capita.

North Carolina maintains a healthy budget. In 1988 it was 29th in the U.S. in its percentage of state and local taxes as a percentage of personal income. (11.36%). The State Budget and Tax News of December 12, 1991 stated that "not every state is making budget adjustments in the first half of the year.

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[16] Survey of State Aid for Libraries, Boston, 1948, (no paging).

In some -- such as Alaska, Nebraska, North Carolina, and West Virginia -- revenues are running in line with expectations."[17] Tax increases for 1989-1991, expressed as a percentage of tax revenues, were as follows for selected states:

West Virginia	18.8%
North Carolina	11.3
Kentucky	14.5
Arkansas	14.8[18]

North Carolina has been considering a lottery, but one has not been passed yet. It must be added that "the correlation between measures of economic health and balanced budgets isn't always close."[19] Still, as was noted before, it is North Carolina which has a positive growth of manufacturing employment.

By contrast, South Carolina is primarily rural. Traditionally, South Carolina, as much of the South, was based on an agrarian economy. In addition there were textiles. Now, according to the State Librarian, Jim Johnson, the current strategy is diversifying the economy so that there is less emphasis on textiles. Greenville and Spartanburg are the most industrialized areas, and the military has helped fuel the economy. Tourism is the number one industry, and Canadians are particularly encouraged to stop and stay in South Carolina en route to Florida with special discounts. Myrtle Beach, South Carolina sponsors a whole week in the spring called Can Am Days. Mr. Johnson says that as the economy becomes diversified, we need to make the case for information. Better information and better access to libraries will improve the business climate.

Small- and medium-sized companies still have no one in the information field on their staffs and so need the public library for access to this information.

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17 State Budget and Tax News, December 12, 1991, p. 8.

18 In Arkansas "the tax increase was approved for education after Governor Clinton won the 1990 election," State Budget and Tax News, December 12, 1991, p. 9.

19 Ibid., December 12, 1991, p. 12

Mr. Johnson stated that public library service was slow to develop historically in the state. Some South Carolina counties have only had service for 20 years, but now all have it. Part of the problem has been the lower tax base of agriculture and textiles (which have had lower salaries -- for example, $3-4 an hour in the textile industry. Now, "with diversification, higher salaries [will be] fed back as taxes."[20] South Carolina now has tax incentives for industries relocating or undergoing sizeable expansion of existing plant. Tax breaks for both categories are good for 3-5 years, after which companies will pay their fair share. Despite tax breaks, companies still pay the share that goes to infrastructure and education; they do not have a "blanket exemption."

When I last studied state aid to libraries in South Carolina, for 1986-1987, the level of per capita support was $.99. This was based on the 1980 census. 1991's support is still based on this census, but the 1992 level will be based on the 1990 census. This will allow for an increase of $325,000 in state support to libraries, resulting in a per capita figure of $1.03. In this readjustment of population, some counties may have lost support, but many others have gained more, in particular the beach areas, Charleston, and the counties near Charlotte, North Carolina. The last General Assembly approved a 3.3% reduction in all agency budgets, and reduced the State Library budget by 58%. Thus, without the $325,000 increase, per capita support would be down to $.90. Despite a reduction of overall funding of $250,000, the $325,000 cushion allows for a per capita

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20 Interview with South Carolina State Librarian, James Johnson, June 12, 1991, Columbia South Carolina.

state library support figure of a dollar on the average. This is up significantly from the initial $50,730 voted by the 1947 legislature. However, South Carolina could still use some economic improvement. In the Index of State Economic Momentum (also called the "Surprise Index"), South Carolina ranked fiftieth of 50 states.[21]

The share of the urban population in South Carolina still is not large. There is no city with over 100,000 population (Columbia, the capital, has 99,000), and the largest county, Greenville County, has less than 300,000. Although the per capita income figure in 1988 was $12,764 -- 77.6% of the national average -- according to Johnson it has gone up since then.[22]

The South Carolina State Library has traditionally not served the public directly but, when "the University of South Carolina's business department was looking for a partner that had ties to the community for military specs (on microfiche) for bidding for federal Defense Department contracts," the State Library got involved. For 2-3 years, through the State Library, businesses have had access to these military specifications.

One other way the State Library has been involved with business is its connection with the State Arts Commission. The Commission, with members of the business community, is studying recommendations of libraries as components of future plans. The State Library is on the advisory board for the Commission, and Mr. Jim Johnson is on both an advisory committee and an overseeing council.

Finally, Mr. Johnson noted the prevalence of important interstate highways in his state -- an idea also brought up in Kentucky and North Carolina. I-95 goes north and south; I-85, from Greenville to Atlanta; I-77 to Ohio; and both I-20 and I-26 hit East and West. He felt this was significant in the development of the economy, and perhaps one can see a relationship to towns served

21 State Budget and Tax News, March 8, 1990, p. 12

22 In 1989 it was 13,616 and in 1990 $15099. See appended Per Capita Ranking of Income.

by interstates in their future building of libraries.

Tennessee is 35th in per capita income ($14,765 in 1989) and in the lower reaches of per capita state and local aid to libraries ($7.70 in 1989). State aid alone is relatively high ($1.50). Sandra Nelson, Assistant State Librarian and head of public library development, suggested tha I look at both personal income and local income. State income has been dropping in Tennessee over the past 6-7 years. The vote on aid was to follow the next day.[23] Aid to schools is $340 million short of projected expenditures. Thus, she urged me to check back after the legislature has passed more or less funding. Governor Ned Ray McWherter (Democrat) is "very fiscally conservative and interested in cutting state government." For example, there are fewer state workers now than when McWherter came into office -- despite the fact that he has opened three major prisons.[24]

Ms. Nelson attributes some to the success of library state aid to the fact that the "South is beginning to provide more Yankee government -- outlanders who are used to services," and to industrialization. She felt strongly that if there is a connection between library support and economic development, it is that development drives support, not the other way around.

The State Library and Archives was previously under the Department of

[23] Interview with Sandra Nelson, June 17, 1991, Nashville, Tennessee.

[24] Governor McWherter and many "prominent Tennesseeans want to spend substantially more than the state is now spending on education. (State Budget and Tax News, December 11, 1990, p. 12.

Education, but was placed under the Secretary of State in 1982. According to Ms. Nelson, there was "significant improvement of funding with the transfer." This belies some earlier research which found that the state libraries under education fared better. At every state library I visited, people agreed that autonomy was the best solution.

According to Sandra Nelson, there has been "significant economic development in the state this decade, and this is driving library support." An example of this is the Nissan plant in Smyrna, Tennessee. First the company developed the plant and improved the economy, and then it improved the library. I talked by phone with Branch Librarian of the Smyrna Public Library, Helen R. Brown, who told me that the children's room was supported by a number of businesses and, most particularly, by Nissan. Also, the company has helped build a local history room.[25] Economic development is most noticeable in central and northeastern Tennessee. Tourism revenues are increasing, there is more filming being done[26], and Nashville is the third largest recording center in the United States after New York and Los Angeles.

When I asked about party affiliation and support, Ms. Nelson said that former governor, Lamar Alexander, although a Republican, supported libraries, but that there is "little question that Republicans feel that libraries are local and should be locally supported." Nonetheless, all of the multi-county library system funding comes from the State Library. Although the Secretary of State is now in the legislative branch (the legislature is primarily Democratic), the governor continues to control the budget. Furthermore, he has line-item control.

Dr. Edwin Gleaves, State Librarian and Archivist, felt that, unless there were still a significant drop, state support in Tennessee falls somewhere in the middle of all states. The population of Tennessee is approaching 5 million

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[25] Telephone conversation with Helen R. Brown, Syyrna Public Library Branch Librarian, Smyrna, Tennessee, January 13, 1992. Smyrna is part of the Rutherford County Library System.

[26] Movie filming and economic development go hand in hand, as perhaps best evidenced in the state of Utah.

and state aid to libraries is roughly $6 million. Dr. Gleaves was particularly concerned about the next day's [27] budget decisions in the legislature for, if libraries did not make 90% of their state aid 2 years ago, they would lose Title I monies (federal). This is because "maintenance of effort " (MOE) would no longer be proven. This would be a loss of $1.6 million annually.

State aid in Tennessee is different, he told me, because there is no direct aid to public libraries. All aid goes to regional systems. It's not a per capita amount as in Alabama. There are 12 multi-county systems with 100 employees. Half of the books bought are bought by the state through regional funds: this is a very high percentage. This might have retarded growth in the public libraries, as all books come from regional rather than local sources. Also, 60% of public libraries are dependent on the regional systems for cataloging.

State support for libraries in Tennessee has had its fiscal problems. At the beginning of FY 1990 (July 1), there was a 5% drop in funds. Also, at mid-year, there was a 9% "reversion" -- when monies are given back to the state. Nine State Library positions were cut. For FY 1991 there was to be a 5.4% reduction over the regional amount appropriated this year, before the 9% reversion. But a month earlier there had been sudden notice that the reduction was to be 14.1 %, not 5.4%.

There are some exceptions to lack of funds, including two strong library programs, one in Oak Ridge (a "laboratory town"), and the other in Kingsport

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27 Interview with Dr. Edwin Gleaves, June 17, 1991, Nashville, Tennessee.

(a "private company town" -- Tennessee Eastman Company of Eastman Kodak). Dr. Gleaves concluded that "good economic development brings about great libraries." [28]

West Virginia is a slight anomaly. Its per capita support figures change continually, as more and more people leave the state for better economic prosperity elsewhere. According to Fred Glazer, Library Commissioner, the favorite license plate frame is "You have a friend in North Carolina."[29] Between 1980 and 1990 there was an 8.8% population loss, resulting in a 25% cutback in the House of Representatives. Naturally, there is a declining tax base. As the population figures decrease, it appears that per capita library spending goes up, so th t West Virginia is 5th best in its support of libraries. The current rate is $2.98 per capita, which is almost 3 times the national average. Mr. Glazer predicts that a further decline in population taking pl ce now will soon cause the per capita library aid to be $3.30. In reality, West Virginia is at the "bottom of the pack" in terms of education, teaching salaries, and large welfare case loads. However, with libraries the state provides 40% of their support; this compares with the national average of 11%. Local and state support combined make up $7.00 per capita. Locally support is less than the national average.

Just as it seems that states in the South are emphasizing education, West Virginia is shying away from support. State Budget and Tax News of April 12, 1990 reported that the governor provided no funding for the "$40 million scheduled ... for "teacher equity,"[30] and that this precipitated a teachers' walkout. The average pay for a teacher in West Virginia is $22,000, almost the lowest paid. In 1989 West Virginia was 49th in the U.S. with per capita income of $12,529, just better in rank than Mississippi. Its "bankruptcy rate is phenomenal," according to Mr. Glazer.

I asked about the designation of West Virginia as a Southern state, as I had considered it. Some of the library literature has compiled statistics,

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[28] Interview with Dr. Edwin Gleaves. Sandra Nelson had an interesting adjective about the connection between libraries and business, maintaining that the idea was a "slippery" one.

[29] Interview with Frederic J. Glazer, State Commissioner, June 19, 1991, Charleston, West Virginia.

[30] p. 12.

including West Virginia as an Eastern state. Mr. Glazer described it as Southern, and mentioned that the governor was elected Chairman of the Southern Regional Education Board, and is also a member of the Southern Governor's Conference.

The current governor, Gaston Caperton, is a Democrat. But, according to Mr. Glazer, the most supportive governor to libraries was a Republican, three-term governor, Arch Moore (now serving a prison sentence for embezzlement). During one of his tenures, between 1965 and 1975, West Virginia led the nation in construction of libraries. Mr. Glazer felt that the conclusion that Democratic governors aid libraries is a "forced conclusion." There has also been a lot of federal money spent on West Virginia libraries, particularly between 1985 and 1989, 1969-1977 and, under Jay Rockefeller, 1977-1985.

The Library Commission was founded in 1929 through an act of the legislature, with its first budget in 1941. In 1946 "state aid for public libraries was ruled unconstitutional by the budget body,"[31] according to the Survey of State Aid for Libraries of 1948. In a letter from the Executive Secretary of the West Virginia Library Commission, Miss Dora Parks explained that they had a "demonstration bookmobile and a field worker in the southern part of the state attempting to stimulate interest for other county library demonstrations." The plan was to have "four $25,000 demos each year" a plan to take 15 years to cover the 57 counties of West Virginia.[32] The current commission is composed of five West Virginia citizens, engaged in policy-making and

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31 Survey of State Aid for Libraries...., Boston 1948, no paging used (alphabetical by state name).

32 From a letter to Mr. Earley from Miss Dora Parks, Executive Secretary of the West Virginia Library Commission, February 12, 1948, cited in the 1948 Survey of State Aid for Libraries.

governing. This group then appoints the Executive Director of the Library Commission, who is independently responsible to the executive branch. Under the governor there are seven super-secretaries, including the Secretary of Education and the Arts, under which are all the institutions of higher education and also a Department of Culture and History, under which the library falls. Public education is currently not under a super-secretary. Functionally, there is no change even with the super-secretary, as Mr. Glazer can still call on the governor directly.

Currently, the libraries are not facing cuts. The same level of state support will be kept, although there may be local shrinkage. But Mr. Glazer emphasized the economic problems of West Virginia, and found that my assumptions of a stronger per capita level of library aid being related to economic growth were unfounded in his state's case. Below is a chart of tax shortfall, the highest in the case of West Virginia:

1991 Average Shortfall in Sales and Income Tax Revenue[33]

Rank	State	Percentage	
2	West Virginia	8.1	
10	Arkansas	1.9	
21	Alabama	-1.1	
24	Kentucky	-2.1	
30	Mississippi	-3.7	
36	Tennessee	-4.6	The national average is -4.6%.
38	South Carolina	-6.2	
42	North Carolina	-7.6	

[33] State Budget and Tax News, November 11, 1991, p. 2.

The per capita funding for libraries, meanwhile, has been steadily improving since Mr. Glazer became Executive Director, in 1972. According to his head of reference, Karen E. Goff, the level in 1972 was $.04. She thus credits him with a 2,700% increase, a fact which Mr. Glazer was too modest to tell. Clearly what Bruce Shuman called a "quantum leap" had occurred. On the following page, I have listed the per capita amounts for the seven states which I visited. It is interesting that West Virginia is in fifth place this year for all states' per capita support (not including local funding). Georgia, another Southern state, but one I did not visit, is currently number 1 in per capita support ($5.03 in 1990).

Both Alabama and Mississippi are in the top half of the nation for per capita support, Alabama ranked 21st and Mississippi, 20th. North Carolina and Tennessee are ranked fourteenth and sixteenth respectively, and South Carolina, 22nd. The only one of these seven states which is in the bottom half of per capita rankings is Kentucky, in 32nd position. There is tending to be a shift in per capita amounts which follows an economic pattern. In 1986-1987 Massachusetts was at its peak of the economic miracle, and ranked first of all states in per capita state support. In 1989, Massachusetts was fifth and this last year (1990), it was seventh. New Hampshire, which has experienced economic downturn in the last few years, not unrelated to Massachusetts' economic situation, is in 41st position of per capita state aid ($.11 per capita, up from .02 in 1989). Oregon is in 39th place with $.16 per capita, up ten cents from the latter half of the eighties, during which its governor, Neil Goldschmidt, was promoting economic growth.

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34 Shuman, p.5. West Virginia at the time had 1,950 million population. Speaking in 1980 Mr. Shuman asserted that "New York, which offers far-and-away the most money for libraries, contributes approximately $.72 per person, while West Virginia, comparatively small in population, spreads its money ($2 million a year) over its libraries at the rate of $1.08 per capita."

Direct state aid: seven states

State	FY 1990	FY 1989	
Alabama	4,506,374	3,506,374	To individual public libraries
per cap.	1.09	.85	
rank	21	22	
Kentucky	1,695,300	1,658,235	To individual public libraries
per cap.	.46	.45	
rank	32	30	
Mississ.	3,054,225	2,688,849	To individual public libraries
per cap.	1.16	1.02	
rank	20	19	
North Carolina	10,949,669	11,289,462	To individual public libraries plus $37,000 to non-public libraries in both years.
per cap.	1.67	1.72	
rank	14	14	
South Carolina	3,290,674	3,709,468	To individual public libraries.
per cap.	.94	.95	
rank	22	20	
Tennessee	6,592,700	6,073,404	To single agencies ($120,000) as well as individual public libraries.
per cap.	1.33	1.23	
rank	16	15	
West Virginia	5,678,046	5,772,826	To individual public libraries
per cap.	3.06	3.11	
rank	5	6	

Source: Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), Lexington, Kentucky

Per Capita Support of Libraries
Top Five

Rank		1986-1987
1	Massachusetts	$5.35
2	New York	4.11
3	Maryland	3.79
4	Alaska	3.12
5	West Virginia	2.98

Rank		1989
1	Georgia	5.66
2	Maryland	4.02
3	New York	4.01
4	Rhode Island	3.72
5	Massachusetts	3.40

Rank		1990
1	Georgia	5.03
2	Maryland	4.21
3	New York	4.01
4	Rhode Island	3.51
5	West Virginia	3.06

Source: Chief Officers of State Library Agencies (COSLA), Lexington, Kentucky)

New York has experienced cut backs in library support, but is still near the top. Perhaps this is because state aid began so early. Charles F. Gosnell, a former State Librarian of New York, wrote that state aid began in 1835, with an annual grant to libraries of $100 a year. At the time of writing, in 1960, 380 New York libraries were still getting this amount.[35]

Another industrialized state which began strong library support in the late 1930's was Michigan.[36] Illinois, according to Gosnell, was a "pioneer in state aid." 37 Michigan is thirteenth in the nation with per capita state library support ($1.91) while Illinois is sixth ($2.83 in 1990). Still, it seems that the trend is changing from the northeastern and middle western states which have provided substantial aid to libraries, and which are hitting a period of recession. Meanwhile, the Southern states are picking up, and per capita aid, long at the lower end of the scale, is moving up toward the the high middle range of rankings, with some few states particularly generous.

My interviews with State Librarians in seven states confirmed some of my assumptions about these trends, and also turned up a number of contradictions. Generally, it was felt that Southern librarians have been strong supporters of LSCA, and have supplied important lobbyists for national library support. Southern legislators have also been important, on the national level, in helping libraries.

Library aid in Southern libraries is below that in other geographic areas as a whole, but has increased many times over the years, as -- for example -- in the case of Alabama, which has experienced more than a tenfold increase. Southern economies are mostly agrarian[38], and therefore the tax base is less than

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35 Charles F. Gosnell, "Evaluation of State Aid to Public Libraries," Library Trends, July 1960, p. 114. Mr. Gosnell was also Assistant Commissioner of Education for Libraries.

36 In 1938-1939, Michigan paid $375,000 for the establishment of county libraries, according to the Survey of State Aid to Libraries, previously cited.

37 Gosnell, p. 120.

38 Interview with James Johnson, Columbia, South Carolina

that of manufacturing economies. Most of the Southern states are attempting to attract industry from outside by giving tax breaks. In most states' cases, the tax structure is regressive, with practically no tax for property, in order to better protect the large property owners such as timber industries (as in Alabama). Tourism is an important economy for most states in my survey. In the case of South Carolina, the state is trying to diversify: this would particularly cause a decline in the traditional role of the textile industry. It is seen that, with diversification of the economy and higher incomes and resulting tax base, library support will develop.

Support to higher education, now a priority of more and more Southern states, like Arkansas and Mississippi, is increasing. It would be interesting in the future to look at education rates and increases or declines in public library support, but it appears superficially that there is a link between education and libraries. Generally, it was felt that a prosperous economy drives library aid, and not the other way around, as I had hypothesized. However, the cycle of better economies supporting libraries and of better information offered by libraries to businesses can be seen. All librarians whom I saw agreed that it is important to support business with information, and most felt that there is a distinct tie-in between libraries and economic development. Some, such as the library in North Carolina, are attempting statewide networks of economic and business information.

West Virginia was a contradiction to my theory that state aid to libraries and state economic development are positively related. West Virginia has one of the poorest economies in the U.S., and yet has a very high per capita level of support to libraries, due to a steadily decreasing population.

I wanted to see if anyone agreed with a theory of Bruce Shuman, that party affiliation of the governor affects aid. With one exception in Alabama, all

librarians felt that party politics is not important. Shuman had thought that Democratic governors, traditional in the South, helped library support. In many cases, it appears that governors who are Republicans are also supportive, as for example Arch Moore in West Virginia. But Shuman's finding that Southern state library aid has increased greatly, and more in relation to any other section of the United States, still holds true. Mississippi is no longer at the bottom of so many economic rankings, and its support of libraries is an element worth evaluating. While states' support of library development is simply one of many factors indicating -- and influencing -- economic prosperity, the relationship of library aid and the economy in such states as Tennessee and North Carolina and Kentucky cannot be ignored.

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